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Environment and sustainable development: international strategy for disaster reduction

Draft resolution submitted by the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Dharmansjah Djumala (Indonesia), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.15

International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 44/236 of 22 December 1989, 49/22 A of 2 December 1994, 49/22 B of 20 December 1994, 53/185 of 15 December 1998 and 54/219 of 22 December 1999, as well as Economic and Social Council resolutions 1999/63 of 30 July 1999 and 2001/35 of 26 July 2001,

Also recalling the forward-looking platform for international concerted disaster reduction as developed by the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction and as expressed in the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action,[1] as well as the Geneva mandate on disaster reduction and the strategy document entitled "A safer world in the twenty-first century: risk and disaster reduction",[2]

Emphasizing the multisectoral, interdisciplinary and cross-cutting nature of natural disaster reduction, and stressing that continued interaction, cooperation and partnerships among the institutions concerned are considered essential to achieve jointly agreed objectives and priorities,

Having considered the current institutional arrangement, as established by the General Assembly in its resolution 54/219 of 22 December 1999, with the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction and the inter-agency secretariat for the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and taking into account the assessment after the first period of operations,

[1] A/CONF.172/9, resolution 1, annex I.

[2] Adopted by the programme forum on the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, held at Geneva from 5 to 9 July 1999.

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Recognizing that disaster reduction is an important element contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and that it should be taken into account in the preparatory process of the World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in Johannesburg in 2002,

Reiterating that natural disasters damage the social and economic infrastructure of all countries, although the long-term consequences of natural disasters are especially severe for developing countries and hamper their sustainable development,

Welcoming the emphasis placed on natural disaster reduction in the Plan of Action for Least Developed Countries, adopted in Brussels in May 2001,

Recognizing that disaster reduction should be regarded as an important function of the United Nations and should receive continued attention,

Stressing the need for the international community to demonstrate the firm political determination required to utilize scientific and technical knowledge to reduce the vulnerability to natural disasters and environmental hazards, taking into account the particular needs of developing countries,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General concerning the Implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;[3]

2. *Expresses* deep concern at the increasing number and scale of natural disasters, which have resulted in massive loss of life and long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences for vulnerable societies worldwide, in particular in developing countries;

3. *Reaffirms* that the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction should perform the functions as indicated in the report of the Secretary General,[3] in particular to serve as a main forum within the United Nations system for devising strategies and policies for disaster reduction and to ensure complementary action by agencies involved in disaster reduction, mitigation and preparedness, and also decides to review the activities of the Task Force in 2003 and that the inter-agency secretariat for disaster reduction should also develop collaborative links with appropriate regional disaster reduction organizations;

4. *Decides* that the Task Force should be modified in order to provide for increased participation and continued membership of regional intergovernmental organizations and key United Nations agencies;

5. *Recognizes* that the Framework of Action for the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, as endorsed by the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, constitutes the basic guide for the implementation of the Strategy, and that this framework shall be periodically reviewed, according to the evolving needs in the field of natural disaster reduction and urges all relevant bodies within the United Nations system to cooperate fully within the context of this framework;

6. *Further stresses* that the inter-agency secretariat for the implementation of the Strategy should be consolidated and enhanced to effectively perform its functions, in particular to serve as the focal point within the United Nations system

[3] A/56/68-E/2001/63.

for the coordination of disaster reduction and to ensure synergies among disaster-reduction activities of the United Nations system and regional organizations and activities in socio-economic and humanitarian fields;

7. *Calls upon* the Governments to continue to cooperate and coordinate their efforts with the United Nations system, other international organizations, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and other partners, as appropriate, in order to ensure effective synergies in the field of natural disasters, and urges the secretariat for disaster reduction to develop such synergies, as appropriate;

8. *Invites* therefore all Governments and relevant international organizations to give appropriate consideration to the issue of natural disaster reduction in their preparations leading up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in September 2002;

9. *Underlines* the importance of adequate financial and administrative resources for the effective functioning of the Task Force and the secretariat for disaster reduction, under the direct authority of the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs;

10. *Calls upon* Governments to establish national platforms or focal points for disaster reduction, urges the United Nations system to provide appropriate support for those mechanisms, and invites the Secretary-General to strengthen the regional outreach of the secretariat for disaster reduction in order to ensure such support;

11. *Invites* Governments and relevant organizations of the United Nations system to strengthen national participation, in particular of disaster-prone countries, in the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, including through national multisectoral and interdisciplinary platforms, in order to achieve sustainable development goals and objectives, with the full utilization of scientific and technical knowledge, including through capacity-building at all levels and the development and strengthening of global and regional approaches that take into account regional, subregional, national and local circumstances and needs, as well as the need to strengthen coordination of national emergency response agencies;

12. *Calls upon* Governments to continue to cooperate and coordinate their efforts in the field of natural disasters within the framework of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, in line with their respective skills and capacities, from prevention to early warning, response, mitigation, rehabilitation and reconstruction, including through capacity-building at all levels, and the development and strengthening of global and regional approaches that take into account regional, subregional, national and local circumstances and needs, as well as the need to strengthen coordination of national emergency response agencies in natural disasters;

13. *Recognizes* the urgent need to further develop and make use of the existing scientific and technical knowledge to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters, and emphasizes the need for developing countries to have access to technology to effectively tackle natural disasters;

14. *Calls upon* Governments and United Nations agencies to collaborate more closely in the sharing of disaster response and mitigation information, to take

full advantage of the United Nations emergency information services such as ReliefWeb, as well as the Internet, and to consider other methods for the sharing of information;

15. *Also calls upon* the secretariat for disaster reduction and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to facilitate the development of better linkages with all relevant actors, including the private sector and financial institutions, in the development of disaster management strategies;

16. *Encourages* the international community to provide the necessary financial resources to the Trust Fund for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and to provide adequate scientific, technical, human and other resources to ensure adequate support for the secretariat for disaster reduction, the Task Force and its working groups;

17. *Requests* the relevant organizations of the United Nations system to support the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction in the implementation of its goals, including by seconding technical staff to the secretariat for disaster reduction;

18. *Endorses* the proposal of the Secretary-General to review the implementation of the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action,[1] within the context of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction framework for action;

19. *Requests* the Secretary-General to optimize further and disseminate through all available channels, including handbooks and information systems, the information necessary for the effective management of international cooperation in the fields of disaster prevention, early warning, response, mitigation, rehabilitation and reconstruction;

20. *Reiterates* the need to continue international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon, within the framework of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, as requested in Economic and Social Council resolutions 1999/46 of 28 July 1999, 2000/33 of 28 July 2000 and General Assembly resolutions 52/200 of 18 December 1997, 53/185 of 15 December 1998, 54/220 of 22 December 1999 and 55/197 of 20 December 2000;

21. *Recognizes* the importance of early warning as an essential element in the culture of prevention, and encourages renewed efforts at all levels to contribute to natural hazard monitoring and impact prediction, the development and transfer of technology, capacity-building for disaster preparedness, the detection of natural hazards and the issuance and communication of early warning, as well as education and professional training, public information and awareness-raising activities, and stresses the need for appropriate action in response to early warning;

22. *Reaffirms* the need for strengthening the international framework for the improvement of early warning systems and disaster preparedness by developing an effective international mechanism for early warning, including the transfer of technology related to early warning to developing countries, which ensures that vulnerable people receive appropriate and timely information, as well as expanding and improving existing systems, in particular those under the auspices of the United Nations, as an integral part of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;

23. *Decides* to maintain the annual observance of the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction on the second Wednesday of October, as a vehicle to promote a global culture of natural disaster reduction, including prevention, mitigation and preparedness;

24. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, including criteria and modalities for the selection of the non-permanent members of the Task Force, and on the progress made in the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, under the agenda item entitled "Environment and sustainable development".